



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

5001 EASTERN AVENUE
POST OFFICE BOX 29260
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017

October 16, 2015

Dear Friends,

As you gather for the Seventeenth International Conference and Awards Banquet of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation, I join you in a spirit of prayerful solidarity and gratitude for your dedication to building a civilization of hope, security and human dignity in the land where Christianity was born and first spread. Unfortunately, I am unable to join you this evening as I am in Rome participating in the Synod of Bishops called by Pope Francis on “The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World.”

Pope Francis said in his letter for Christmas last year that Christians in the Holy Land are “called to be artisans of peace, reconciliation and development, to promote dialogue, to build bridges in the spirit of the Beatitudes, and to proclaim the Gospel of peace.” Likewise, it is precisely out of our faith conviction that we here can make a positive contribution to human security in support of our Christian sisters and brothers in the Holy Land who face daily the challenges of conflict, division and hardship.

The theme for this year’s meeting, *Our Faith is Commitment to Justice, Peace and Coexistence*, affirms this understanding that our hope and efforts are grounded in our faith in Jesus Christ. Animated by that faith, the works of charity and justice supported by the Foundation engage human hearts, transform them and help create instruments of peace and coexistence. Such actions nurture those human relationships which open us one to another and are needed to find the peace which so often eludes us.

The men and women of the Foundation, and those who help support its work, are to be commended. In a special way, I would like to recognize this year’s award recipients and thank them for their particular service in helping the Christian community in the Holy Land to meet the challenges of justice, understanding, and harmony among people which builds a true and lasting peace.

Asking God’s blessings on you and the good work of the Foundation, with every good wish, I am

Faithfully in Christ,

Archbishop of Washington

17th International Conference and Awards Banquet
Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation